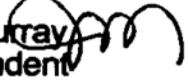



STAFFORD COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD

Agenda Consideration

TOPIC: Equal Access Act **ITEM NO:** 4D

PREPARED BY: Jean S. Murray, 
Superintendent **MEETING:** April 6, 2004
ACTION DATE: N/A
Daryl A. Nelson, 
Executive Director of Administrative & Legal Services

ACTION REQUESTED BY THE SUPERINTENDENT:

That the School Board receive the attached for information concerning the Equal Access Act

KEY POINTS: Please see attached forms for complete details.

The board received citizen comments at its meeting of March 9, 2004, concerning the student yearbook at Rodney Thompson Middle School. At issue is whether the photograph of a non-school sponsored group, which has been provided space to meet at the school outside school hours, must be included in the yearbook. The photograph has been included in the yearbook in past years. The school administration has declined to include it in this year's publication. Citizens speaking for the group assert that the federal Equal Access Act requires that the picture be included.

The board requested the opinion of legal counsel in this matter. Counsel has taken the position that the Equal Access Act is not applicable as that act only applies to secondary schools and Rodney Thompson Middle School is not defined by state law as being a secondary school.

Attached for your consideration are copies of:

1. The Equal Access Act, 20 U.S.C. §4071, et seq.;
2. Regulation of the Virginia Board of Education, 8 VAC 20-131-280; and,
3. Board Policy 7-49
4. Board Regulation R7-49

SCHOOL BOARD GOAL: (Goal 3) Encourage parents and the community to increase their interest and involvement in schools.

FUNDING SOURCE: N/A

AUTHORIZATION REFERENCE: The Equal Access Act, 20 U.S.C. §4071, et seq.